

TO: Labor and Public Employees Committee

DATE: February 15, 2007

RE: Raised Bill No. 7034, An Act Concerning Collective Bargaining Rights For In-Home State Subsidized Day Care Providers

Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Karin Reed and I run a licensed in-home day care in Hartford, Connecticut.

I urge you to support Raised Bill Number 7034, **AN ACT CONCERNING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS FOR IN-HOME STATE SUBSIDIZED DAY CARE PROVIDERS.**

I am a child-care professional, not a baby-sitter. It is my responsibility to ensure an educational and safe environment where children can learn and grow. The time that children spend in my home is time they spend learning vital social and academic skills that they will use for the rest of their lives. My day-care has been in operation for 21 years, but others are not so lucky. Many providers are forced to close their doors because of low reimbursement or the inability of parents to pay.

The Care for Kids program requires that the state re-determine the eligibility of parents every six months. As a child-care provider, I work with parents to ensure that they fully understand the requirements of the program and that they meet all of their deadlines. Re-determination can be a complicated process, and parents are often confused about their responsibility and need extra help. This means that I need to be an expert on Care for Kids in addition to being an expert child care provider.

The parents of the children I watch rely on me for so much. Childcare providers like me should have the ability to work with the state to ensure access to our

services for more working families in need. It's time that we have a voice in regulations and licensing, and our working conditions. It's time to raise standards, and with the Union, we can raise standards for everyone – ourselves and the children and families we serve.

Giving child care providers the right to bargain collectively will allow us to offer consistent care for children by negotiating fairer wages, affordable health care, and opportunities for training for home-based providers. Please support Raised Bill No. 7034.

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